

**ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL with VALOR RECOMMENDATION FOR
SPECIALIST JAY SCHRAD
MOTOR TRANSPORT OPERATOR**

On 20 March 2005, Convoy 678N was traveling north on Alternate Supply Route Bismark enroute to Logistic Supply Area Anaconda when forty to fifty anti-coalition forces with the intent to cause American casualties ambushed the convoy. The ambush consisted of the following elements: heavy small arms fire; an improvised explosive device placed in the road median; two road obstacles meant to funnel and fix the convoy; accurate rocket propelled grenade fire with direct hits to vehicles; and a ground assault of 10-15 insurgents upon a line of convoy escort platforms. The insurgents captured were carrying handcuffs suggesting they were intending to capture American troops. Specialist Schrad was the driver in the maintenance M915 positioned in the rear of the convoy when the convoy came to a sudden halt. Specialist Schrad heard a barrage of gunfire and the cries of a wounded soldier over the radio. Rocket propelled grenades were falling on forward trucks and more soldiers were being wounded. Specialist Schrad was monitoring his radio and heard that Sergeant Ricketts was wounded, on the ground, and needed to be extracted from the kill zone. Shortly after hearing about the sergeant needing extraction, Specialist Sharples, the driver of the M915 in front of their truck, ran to Specialist Schrad's truck and told Specialist Schrad and Specialist Birkel, his co-driver, that some of the civilian drivers in the convoy had dismounted and that he needed help getting them back in. Specialist Birkel radioed that he was going to get Sergeant Ricketts and dismounted. Under fire, Specialist Schrad dismounted his vehicle to provide security for the rear of the convoy and noticed that the insurgents were focusing their fire on Specialist Birkel and Specialist Sharples as they ran to the front of the convoy. Sensing that the extraction depended on Specialist Birkel and Specialist Sharples, Specialist Schrad fired at the insurgents' positions in the houses and dunes to the left of the convoy. With the help of Specialist Detman, the gunner in the convoy escort platform positioned behind Specialist Schrad's M915 bobtail, Specialist Schrad killed or wounded two to five insurgents, neutralizing the enemy positions and allowing Specialist Birkel and Specialist Sharples to extract Sergeant Ricketts. Specialist Schrad's actions were critical to the successful extraction of Sergeant Ricketts that ultimately enabling the convoy to exit the kill zone. His bravery in combat while in direct contact with the enemy reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.